DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BUSINESS PLAN 2002-03

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Table of Contents

1. Planning Context 1
2. Mission 3
3. Goals 3
4. Core Businesses Functions 4
5. Priorities for 2002-03 by Goal 8
6. Priorities for 2002-03 by Core Business Area 21
7. Budgeting Context 32
8. Outcomes and Outcome Measures 35

1. Planning Context

The Department has a broad mandate that includes responsibility for education and training from grade primary through to all post-secondary and adult learning destinations. These destinations include university, community college, private career colleges, adult education, apprenticeship and other aspects of human resource development. Other responsibilities include public libraries, provincial immigration matters and the Youth Secretariat.

In 2001-02, the net budget of the Department was $888,437,000. In addition the budget for Assistance to Universities was $201,232,000.

The Department of Education is structured into three main program branches and five support units. The Program branches include:

- the Public Schools Branch, including English Program Services, Student Services, Regional Education, Testing and Evaluation, African Canadian Services, Mi'kmaq Services, Learning Resources and Technology, and Centre for Entrepreneurship Education and Development
- the Acadian and French Language Services Branch, including French First and Second Language
- the Higher Education and Adult Learning Branch, including Universities, Community Colleges, Private Career Colleges, Adult Education, Skill Development and Training, Apprenticeship Training, Teacher Certification, Youth Secretariat, Student Assistance, Rehabilitation Programs and Services, and Public Libraries

The support units are Corporate Services, including Finance, Facilities Management, and Information Technology; Human Resources and Legal Services; Corporate Policy, including Policy and Planning, Information Management, and Research and Statistics; Education Renewal; and Communications.

To recognize the importance of strong coordination of skill development activities, the Department of Education has been identified as the lead agency to deliver a comprehensive labour market strategy. The Department will work with business, labour and educational institutions to improve the skill level of the existing Nova Scotia workforce and develop the appropriate skill sets for new entrants to Nova Scotia workplaces.

Key Challenges

An important focus of the Department's activities is to enable Nova Scotians to develop their potential through acquisition of the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to become lifelong learners who can identify and solve problems; deal effectively with change; work collaboratively with others; communicate clearly, competently and confidently; and make thoughtful and

responsible decisions. Such learners are enabled to participate in a healthy, democratic society, and in a lifetime of meaningful work which supports a prosperous, sustainable economy.

A key element of this focus is to ensure that standards of quality are established, measured and reported upon. In a cyclical process, quality is defined by the extent to which programs, services and educational experiences meet the needs of learners, which is set out as written standards. Those standards enable the system to measure its achievements and account to Nova Scotians for quality, and as a basis for making educational improvements.

The Department of Education faces major challenges in the delivery of educational programs and services in response to the needs of our learners. The demand for program improvements in the English and French systems is ongoing in response to deteriorating equipment and facilities, aging curriculum, student assessment needs, professional development needs, as well as the need to implement new programs in priority areas. Reports of the Special Education Implementation Review Committee, the Black Learners Advisory Committee and the Teacher Demand and Supply Committee have created further funding pressures on the Department. The challenge set before us is how to provide a response to these needs which is meaningful and effective, while continuing to live within our budget targets.

The effective use of technology can assist the Department in meeting the current and emerging needs of its stakeholders. However, providing, supporting and refreshing technology continue to be a challenge for improving our administrative systems and methods of delivery, and for ensuring that our young people are prepared to function and compete in a world where technology and communications are so important. The availability and integration of relevant technology is critical to enable the Department to achieve all of its goals.

Access to a continuum of programs and services to support lifelong learning must be enhanced. Student debt loads are among the highest in Canada which creates a particular challenge for Nova Scotians in accessing post-secondary education. The Department recognizes the need to coordinate our provincial programs which are designed to assist Nova Scotians in accessing the labour market, and will be proceeding with Skills Nova Scotia.

We must continue to build strong foundations of quality, standards and accountability across the education and training system. Measures are proposed in this Business Plan to ensure strong governance systems are in place, resources are used wisely, and results are reported.

2. Mission

The Department's goals, guiding principles, and strategies help develop an environment where education and training are valued, achievement is celebrated, and learners are provided with opportunities and tools for rewarding and successful learning experiences.

Our mission is...

to provide excellence in education and training for personal fulfilment and for a productive, prosperous society.

Belief statements that underpin this mission statement reflect the Department's commitment to access to lifelong learning opportunities, full participation at all levels of the education and training system for all Nova Scotians, and accountability of all partners.

3. Goals

The Government of Nova Scotia has adopted six goals for public policy initiatives. These goals provide a framework for departmental activities.

1. To put and keep Nova Scotia's finances in order.
2. To put crucial services - health, education, social - on a sustainable footing.
3. To provide responsible, accountable government.
4. To create conditions that help the economy grow.
5. To provide Nova Scotians with an opportunity to learn throughout their lives, so that they can continue to succeed in a rapidly changing world.
6. To foster an environment that allows and encourages Nova Scotians to work, raise families and stay in Nova Scotia.

The Government has also established priorities for 2002-03. They are:

- fiscal stability
- sustainable health care management
- growing the economy
- education and skills training
- professional public service

The Department of Education's goals for 2002-03, are focused on fulfilling the government goals and priorities and fall within these seven main goals:

- To improve conditions for learning in the public education system
- To strengthen educational programming and services in priority areas
- To provide relevant and high quality post-secondary education and training
- To promote healthy, active learning communities and families
- To foster access, equity and diversity through and within education and training
- To develop a skilled and adaptable workforce
- To strengthen accountability in the areas of governance, resource investment and utilization, and reporting of results

The priorities that follow support these goals and the goals and priorities of Government. To meet the business planning guidelines, they are organized according to the lead Core Business Area of the Department with the supporting or partnering areas noted.

4. Core Business Functions

The mandate of the Department of Education spans the public school system, community colleges, universities, private career colleges, a comprehensive system of adult learning, apprenticeship, public libraries, and other programs and services to support lifelong learning. The core business functions of the Department can be defined under four areas: P-12 education, higher education and adult learning, corporate policy and corporate administrative services.

1. P-12 Education

- provides advice to school boards on all matters pertaining to public education
- coordinates the development and implementation of policy, programs, courses, and educational services for the provincial public school system
- coordinates the development and implementation of services for students with special needs and other student support services
- assists school boards in developing and coordinating professional development programs
- coordinates the development of specialized educational programming and services to support the African–Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaw students

- negotiates and administers federal assistance programs provided under Official Languages in Education Program for French First and Second Language Programs
- coordinates a Program of Learning Assessment for Nova Scotia (PLANS), to develop, administer and mark Nova Scotia Examinations (NSE) in grade 12, and other assessments in elementary and junior high schools
- coordinates participation in the national School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) and in the Program of International Student Assessment (PISA)
- publishes an annual Minister's Report to Parents on the results of provincial, national and international assessments in language arts, mathematics and science
- monitors implementation of public school programs, educational services, and related priorities
- provides technology services and resources to support the curriculum

2. *Higher Education and Adult Learning*

- advises the provincial government on all matters relating to universities, Nova Scotia Community College and Collège de l'Acadie
- provides funding and supports universities, community colleges and regional public libraries
- provides a range of adult learning programs and services to support community-based literacy, family literacy, and workplace education
- administers the GED Testing Service and coordinates the delivery system and certification for the Nova Scotia High School Diploma for Adults
- leads or participates in federal-provincial and inter-provincial negotiations related to post-secondary education, youth employment, labour market and skills development
- promotes and funds the administration, development, delivery, and mobility of apprenticeship training and journeyperson certification in cooperation with business and industry partners and other provincial jurisdictions
- advises the Minister on matters relating to the Apprenticeship System and recommends proposed trades for designation

- advises the Minister on matters relating to training at private career colleges, develops related policy and administers the *Private Career Colleges Act*
- provides a range of accessibility-related programs, goods and services to adult Nova Scotians with disabilities in post-secondary training and employment
- provides teacher certification and classification functions, recognizes and maintains teaching service records
- provides labour market information for decision-making by individuals, education and training institutions, government, business, industry and labour
- creates partnerships with business, industry, labour and training institutions to develop a skilled, adaptable workforce
- develops student loan policy, manages loan portfolio and administers the Canada and Nova Scotia student loan programs
- coordinates regional public library services and promotes library cooperation at national, regional and provincial levels
- advises government on the issues that impact on the lives of young Nova Scotians in their transition to adulthood and provides information services to youth and youth serving organizations

3. Corporate Policy

- coordinates the development, communication, and evaluation of policy for all departmental jurisdictions
- undertakes strategic and business planning for the Department
- supports a strategic focus on corporate departmental issues (e.g. legislative and policy matters)
- undertakes focussed research to address current and emerging issues across all sections of the Department
- develops and maintains a comprehensive management information system and statistical service relating to public education matters

- coordinates interprovincial and intergovernmental relations in matters relating to the responsibilities of the Department
- coordinates provincial immigration matters
- administers the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and supports the implementation of records management for the Department
- manages departmental information resources, library services, and print and electronic publishing initiatives

4. Corporate Administrative Services

- provides comptrollership functions and administers provincial grants to school boards, the Nova Scotia Community College, Collège de l'Acadie, universities, community-based learning organizations and public libraries
- undertakes grant-recipient audits, facilities planning, and equipment acquisition
- provides support to school boards on financial matters and monitors financial accountability of school boards
- manages the school capital construction program, the emergency capital program, and the school indoor air quality program
- monitors school boards' student transportation systems
- operates the school book bureau
- provides human resources and legal services to school boards on matters of provincial scope to build expertise and consistency across the public school system in dealing with common issues (e.g. collective bargaining, grievance handling, human resource administration, and accountability structures)
- provides cost-effective wide area network (EDnet) communications and services to schools, school boards, community colleges and libraries for access to the Internet by students, teachers and the public
- promotes and supports the use of technology solutions to improve service to students, teachers, and administrators by developing and supporting client-focused software and maximizing the use of internet-based applications and technologies

5. Priorities for 2002-03 by Goal

Note that the priorities in this section are identical to those in section 6, the only difference is the way they are organized.

Goal 1: To improve conditions for learning in the public education system

As part of its Youth Pathways and Transitions strategy, the Department is developing a resource, *Increasing Learning Success*, to assist high schools in providing a range of services, strategies, and organizational structures designed to improve conditions for learning and increase learning success for all students. The Department will distribute this resource in 2002-03 and will continue to work with boards and schools on related initiatives. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Higher Education and Adult Learning)

A professional development program of studies offered to French second language teachers by Université Sainte-Anne will be coordinated and monitored by the Department. The aim of the program is to offer an opportunity for French second language teachers to improve their French language skills while refining their knowledge and expertise regarding the teaching of French as a second language. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The *Information Economy Initiative* to support teaching and learning in grades 4-6 through the use of technology will continue. This initiative includes the provision of computers, software, professional development, and technical support. The Department will continue to coordinate SchoolNet Grassroots initiatives for the development of on-line learning activities for students and to refurbish computers for schools through the federal-provincial Computers for Schools initiative (Technology Recycling Program). For CSAP schools, these last two initiatives are coordinated at the school board level. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Corporate Administrative Services)

With the goal to improve conditions for learning, the Department has also developed a Program of Learning Assessment for Nova Scotia (PLANS). PLANS will continue to provide reliable information on student achievement in specific curriculum areas. During 2002-03, assessments scheduled to be administered are: SAIP Writing (ages 13 and 16, English and French), Junior High Mathematics, Mathématiques 12, Mathématiques avancées 12, Calcul différentiel et intégral 12, Chemistry 12 (English and French immersion) and Physics 12. As well, other assessments will be developed for administration in 2003-04, namely the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), Reading and Writing Grade 6, Elementary Mathematics and Mathematics 12. (Core Business Function: P-12)

The Department will continue with the implementation of the Code of Conduct, which covers all school members. Implementation will include professional development and the development of

Code of Conduct Guidelines (including discipline tracking and reporting; a policy on formal reference checks for all new staff and volunteers; and a complaints resolution process). Implementation of this initiative will continue with cooperative discipline training and the development of a handbook on positive behavioural implementation challenges. (Core Business Function: P-12)

The Department will fulfil its mandate of identifying school capital needs through the continual operation of the School Capital Construction Committee, which will report to government on prioritization of capital funding needs for Nova Scotia schools. The Department will continue the delivery of school capital projects approved in July 2000, scheduled for delivery by 2004. Three additional schools were approved for construction in 2001-02, bringing the total to 19. Six of the schools were completed by the fall of 2001, one was completed in March 2002, and another eight will be under construction in 2002-03. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Corporate Administrative Services)

There will be a renovation, addition and alteration program that will enhance and/or replace major school building components on a priority basis. The Department will work with school boards and other provincial departments to identify and resolve environmental problems. A database of school renovation and maintenance needs will be developed in conjunction with school boards. This database will assist the Department in establishing renovation and maintenance needs for schools in 2002-03 and beyond. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Corporate Administrative Services)

The Education Consultative Forum (ECF) Subcommittee on Teacher Demand and Supply submitted a report to the Minister and the ECF in December of 2001. Recommendations in this report are intended to address potential shortages of teachers in certain subject areas and improve the utilization of the substitute teacher workforce. Government will undertake a review of these recommendations to determine future direction. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Higher Education and Adult Learning, Corporate Policy)

The Department will examine the teacher certification requirements, standards and procedures within the Atlantic Provinces, with a view to achieving greater mobility within the region. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Department will continue to update correspondence study courses to reflect current public school program priorities and will work through APEF to develop on-line Atlantic Canada courses. (Core Business Function: P-12)

In 2002-03, the Department will implement a mechanism to support the Provincial Student Education Council. The Council will help improve communications between the Department and public school students, give students a voice in education decisions, and provide students

with new opportunities for leadership development and training.. (Core Business Function: P-12)

A video is presently being developed to demonstrate effective classroom practices for teaching Core French at the junior high level. This video will be presented to teachers during professional development days in 2002-03. (Core Business Function: P-12)

The Department will pursue pilot projects in school accreditation, to give parents and schools greater opportunity to support school improvement. The pilot projects will allow school advisory councils, in consultation with school staff and home and school associations, to develop school improvement plans linked to educational priorities in the school. Those priorities must be linked to evidence of needs, such as parent surveys, statistics regarding student outcomes, test results, etc. The improvement plan will be assessed by an external team. Once approved, the school will implement the plan. After demonstrating progress in meeting its goals, the school will be accredited. (Core Business Functions: P-12)

The Department will work with school boards on a Time to Learn Strategy. The goal is to set daily standards of time to spend on math and language arts. A minimum standard of 90-120 minutes daily is proposed in language arts for elementary. In math, a daily standard of 45 minutes to one hour is proposed at elementary. The Department will also work with school boards on ways to add class time in higher grades in these essential subjects. (Core Business Functions: P-12)

Goal 2: To strengthen educational programming and services in priority areas

Literacy continues to be a priority. The Department's *Active Young Readers/Jeunes lecteurs actifs* initiative will continue to provide support for the literacy development of students in grades primary–6. The Department will develop an assessment resource for use by grades 4–6 Anglophone classroom teachers in assessing students' reading development, strengths and learning needs. The Department will participate with the other Atlantic provinces in developing a literacy assessment resource for French immersion students in grades 4–6. (Core Business Function: P-12)

The *Active Young Readers/Jeunes lecteurs actifs* initiative will expand to provide increased support for grade 7 students. The focus at this level will be on high quality literacy instruction across the curriculum for all learners and effective interventions for those students having literacy difficulties. The Department will provide learning resources for students, leadership training for school board teams, summer institutes, and other professional development programs for Anglophone and Francophone teachers. (Core Business Function: P-12)

The Department's literacy strategy will be expanded to include an emphasis on grammar, usage,

spelling, and punctuation through a *Writers in Action* initiative beginning at the grade 4 level. This initiative will ensure that all students have access to structured, sequential language instruction. This initiative will include the provision of learning resources, teaching materials, and professional development programs. (Core Business Function: P-12)

A literacy strategy will be developed for Acadian students beginning at the grade 4 level and extending to grade 7. This initiative, entitled "Écrivains à l'oeuvre", has been broadened to include grammar, punctuation and spelling strategies. The Department will identify appropriate resource materials for teachers and students, and will provide professional development through a summer institute. (Core Business Function: P-12)

The Department will continue the development of curriculum guides and identification of learning resources for French first language core programs, Core French, as well as French immersion programs, and will continue to assist school boards with the implementation of French first language and French second language programs. (Core Business Function: P-12)

In recent years, program initiatives at the elementary level have focused on the implementation of new curriculum in particular subject areas—mathematics, language arts, physical education, and visual arts. This subject area focus will continue in 2002-03 with the implementation of the grades primary and 1 Atlantic Canada science curriculum. The Department will assist school boards through the provision of a leadership workshop, a summer institute, teaching resources, and the tools young learners need for hands-on, minds-on science experiences. (Core Business Function: P-12)

In 2002-03, the Department will introduce an initiative to assist elementary teachers in planning their instructional program in ways that reflect the connections among the expected learning outcomes in various subject areas. This *CurriculumLinks* initiative will begin with grades primary and 1 and will include the provision of professional development workshops and resources. Effective use of instructional time will be a particular emphasis. (Core Business Function: P-12)

Mathematics continues to be a priority area. The Department will assist school boards in strengthening their elementary and junior high mathematics programs through the provision of workshops for lead teachers and school principals in each region. Emphasis will be placed on effective use of learning materials. The Department will begin development of a data bank (hard copy and on-line) of mathematics questions to assist teachers in grades 7–12 in designing tests, quizzes, assignments and examinations. Questions for grades 9–11 mathematics will be available by June 2002. Results of program evaluation research currently underway to assess the effectiveness of the new courses, Mathematics 10 Plus and Mathematics Foundations 10 Plus, will be available in August 2002. The Department will use these results to inform the strategy for responding to students who require additional support in mathematics. (Core Business Function: P-12)

Canadian History 11, Histoire du Canada 11, and Études acadiennes 11 will be implemented in September 2002. The Department will assist school boards with implementation of these courses and other courses that fulfil the Canadian history credit requirement—African Canadian History 11, Gaelic Studies 11, and Mi'kmaq Studies 10. This initiative will include the provision of an implementation leadership workshop, a summer institute, learning resources, and teaching materials. (Core Business Function: P-12)

In 2001-02, two components of the Youth Pathways and Transitions strategy were introduced: the Nova Scotia Student Career Portfolio and the Framework for Joint Educational Program Design and the development of articulation agreements with the Nova Scotia Community College. The implementation of the Youth Pathways and Transitions strategy will continue in 2002-03 with the development of a framework for a Nova Scotia Youth Apprenticeship Program. The Department will also develop two interactive technology course options linked to labour market opportunities, Multimedia 12 and Geomatics 12. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Department will participate in a needs assessment, funded by the Software Human Resource Council, to determine its future participation in the "Software Career Preparation Project", which may provide transition to work opportunities for the information technology sector for Nova Scotia high school students. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Department will continue to work within the APEF on projects for Acadian schools and for French second language programs. Such projects include the French language arts program offered in grades 9 to 12 in Acadian schools, the analysis of a regional survey administered to grade 11 students no longer taking Core French, and the development of a literacy assessment resource for grade 4-6 French immersion students. (Core Business Function: P-12)

The Department will be negotiating with Canadian Heritage for Supplementary Funding under the Official Languages in Education Program. The Department has several initiatives to propose and a submission for funding has been made. (Core Business Function: P-12)

The Department will continue to develop, evaluate, and distribute print and non-print resources to support public school program implementation and teacher professional development, and to provide an archival photographic service for museums. (Core Business Function: P-12)

An ESL Teacher's resource is under development to include math and language assessments, teaching strategies, program planning, evaluation and reporting. (Core Business Function: P-12, Corporate Policy)

Goal 3: To provide relevant and high quality post-secondary education and training

As the lead agency responsible to deliver a comprehensive labour market strategy, the Department of Education will work with business, labour and educational institutions to improve the skill level of the existing Nova Scotia workforce and develop the appropriate skills sets for new entrants to Nova Scotia workplaces. Priorities for 2002-03 include:

- development of a comprehensive Skills Nova Scotia Strategy
- creation of a Partners Forum to advise Government on the broad issues and opportunities facing the Nova Scotian labour market
- development of Labour Market Information Products and Services to support decision-making by individuals, business and labour, policy makers and education providers
- creation of funding mechanisms to support strategic investment and action through a Sectoral or Occupational Opportunity Analysis

The Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities will consider issues including: quality assurance, accountability and the role and capacity of the post-secondary education institutions. The Advisory Board will also consult with post-secondary institutions on issues such as the need to define institutional and system-wide mission statements, greater articulation between the community college and university systems, and institutional and system planning to respond to the need for health care professionals. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

Université Sainte-Anne and Collège de l'Acadie will be assisted to merge and become a university/college for the Acadian/French population of Nova Scotia, achieving both critical mass and a wider delivery capacity. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Department will work with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) on their growth strategy. This growth strategy recommends increasing NSCC enrolment to approximately 11,000 students, an increase of 50%. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

In 2002-03, the Department will conduct a review of the General Regulations made pursuant to the *Private Career Colleges Regulation Act* to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the private career college sector and to ensure that consumer protection remains a priority. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

Goal 4: To promote healthy, active learning communities and families

The Department's Active Healthy Schools strategy will include continued assistance to school boards in the implementation of the grades primary–6 and grades 7–9 physical education curriculum. The Department will develop new physical education curriculum for grades 10–12. (Core Business Functions P-12)

The Department will continue to collaborate with partners on intergovernmental projects including the Physically Active Children and Youth (PACY) Strategy, the Tobacco Strategy, Youth Mental Strategy, Youth Sexual Health Strategy, Healthy Eating Strategy, and Chronic Disease Strategy. With reference to the Tobacco Strategy, the Department will provide consultative services to boards in their implementation of tobacco prevention curriculum and high school peer-led cessation initiatives, including use of related learning resources. The Department will continue to work with other members of the Nova Scotia School Smoking Prevention Coalition and to provide consultative and advisory services regarding *Making It Work! A Handbook for Creating Effective School Smoking Policies.* (Core Business Function: P-12)

The Department will implement a number of safety initiatives. In addition to those noted under other goals, these will include the distribution of *Physical Education Safety Guidelines* and *Science Safety Guidelines* to all public schools and the provision of consultative services to school boards regarding their implementation to ensure safe learning environments for all schools in the areas of science and physical education. (Core Business Function: P-12)

In September 2002, the Department will begin implementation of new curriculum for health education grades 4–6. Related resources, including *Drawing The Line: A resource for the prevention of problem gambling*, developed in partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Health Problem Gambling Services, and *Growing Up, Growing Older: A classroom resource for promoting intergenerational understanding,* developed in partnership with the Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat, will also be implemented at this time. In consultation with health community partners, the *Health/Personal Development and Relationships: Grades 7–9* program will be revised to strengthen the health education component; learning resources will be identified to support implementation of the new curriculum in 2003-04. (Core Business Function: P-12)

The Department will continue to implement the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) to administer and coordinate, through partnerships, a system of programs that will create a clear pathway for adults seeking a high school graduation diploma. This system will deliver the credits required for the new Nova Scotia High School Diploma for Adults. Priority will be given to the development of guidelines and procedures for the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition component of the diploma. Curriculum development to ensure the Adult Learning Program meets the outcomes of the high school program will be ongoing. During the

implementation phase of NSSAL the Department will work closely with NSCC, Collège de l'Acadie, school boards, community-based learning organizations, Human Resource Development Canada and Community Services. Through its seven Regional Planning Teams, the Department will continue to strengthen partnerships between these funding agencies and program delivery organizations. The teams will identify adult learning priorities, develop strategies for informing the public and other partners of the School for Adult Learning and establish referral protocols to ensure that adult learners are appropriately served. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Higher Education and Adult Learning)

Priorities for the Community Learning Initiative this year include the development of a professional development strategy for adult literacy practitioners. Particular emphasis will be placed on expanding opportunities for educators to receive training and support on student assessment and program evaluation. The Department will work in partnership with Community Learning Networks and the National Literacy Secretariat to distribute learner intake assessment and portfolio tools, as well as program evaluation resources. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Department will continue implementation of the General Educational Development new test series (GED 2002) in order to provide adults with an opportunity to acquire a high school equivalency. Successfully passing the GED improves Nova Scotians' access to further training and employability. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Higher Education and Adult Learning)

Availability of school facilities for purposes other than education varies across the province, in terms of ease of access, rates and hours of availability. A policy framework is being developed to equalize access, standardize rates charged, and ensure facilities are available for community and youth use for as many hours as possible. In 2002-03, the Department will introduce the policy framework and assist school boards to effectively adjust their present practices. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Corporate Administrative Services)

The Department will facilitate innovative partnerships to encourage family involvement in learning. In collaboration with the Halifax Youth Foundation, the Department will expand project opportunities though the Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund. It will also explore the creation of good practice guidelines to direct the development of quality programs. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Department will work with hospital and community partners to advance an infant gift-book program, *Read to Me!*, which supports learning development in our youngest citizens. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

Nova Scotia's public libraries are expanding their efforts to readily provide consumer health and wellness information across the province. A new partnership with the Alzheimer Society will expand the availability of quality print resources throughout the province. Under this

partnership, the Society has placed a core collection of print resources in all nine regional libraries. This model will be used as a basis for further partnerships with other member organizations in the Health Charities Network. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Adopt-a-Library Literacy program, in partnership with the RCMP and local police agencies, will be expanded to a province-wide program as a pro-active crime prevention initiative. Beginning this year, ongoing funding sources, partnerships and an administrative infrastructure will be developed with the goal of having an established foundation at the end of three years. This initiative is expected to have a significant impact on both literacy and crime prevention. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The regional libraries' Summer Reading Program will be expanded to include reading/writing camps for children. In partnership with the Writers Federation of Nova Scotia, a pilot project will see a week long day camp in various locations across the province. At the camp children will receive further encouragement and support in reading and writing by selected local authors. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

Goal 5: To foster access, equity and diversity through and within education and training

The Department will continue to work toward the establishment of an Africentric Learning Institute and implementation of other key recommendations of the *Black Learners Advisory Committee (BLAC) Report on Education.* Consultative and advisory services will be provided to boards and schools that wish to pilot African Heritage Literature 12 in 2002-03. The Department will assist boards with implementation of the revised African Canadian History 11 and Mi'kmaq Studies 10 courses. The development of Mi'kmaw language courses at the junior high level will continue. (Core Business Function: P-12)

The recommended expansion of the community college enrolments will enable the NSCC to address numerous access, equity and diversity issues and strengthen its provision of programs in metro and select regional sites. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The delivery of student assistance in Nova Scotia is undergoing substantial examination. Issues such as the provision of enhanced student debt relief, new partnerships with financial institutions, regionalization of some services and a new designation policy for institutions are being considered. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

Nova Scotia has cooperated with the other Atlantic provinces to revise and renew training standards in all Apprenticeship programs. In 2002-03, the standards will be revised in thirteen additional Apprenticeship programs which will be implemented through the training providers. In addition, the Department will increase accessibility to Apprenticeship programs by expanding

the programs offered through distance education and part-time studies. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) initiative will develop transition to employment programs for Nova Scotians with disabilities involved in post secondary training. The EAPD initiative will seek matching funding or donated services from various partners to ensure these students achieve greater success in obtaining relevant employment following graduation. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Virtual Library initiative will deliver interactive library service and equal access to library information resources to all Nova Scotians via the Internet. When fully implemented, the Virtual Library will allow users to electronically register for a library card, access on-line reference sources, place holds on materials in their own library's collection, renew items that are out on loan, request that materials be borrowed from outside their regional library system, and interactively receive an answer to an information query. This will greatly increase the capacity of people in small and rural communities for lifelong learning. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The *Racial Equity Policy* will be introduced in 2002-03. This policy outlines the department's commitment to promoting equity in our public school system. The policy supports the work done by school boards to develop their own racial equity policies and will provide an overall provincial framework to ensure consistency. A Human Rights in Education Conference will be held in the fall of 2002 to highlight and raise awareness of issues outlined in the Racial Equity Policy. (Core Business Function: P-12)

Goal 6: To develop a skilled and adaptable workforce

The *Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act* was last revised in 1989. The Provincial Apprenticeship Board will continue with public consultation and focus group sessions following the completion and distribution of a discussion paper in late 2001-02. In early 2002-03, a recommendation report on revisions to the *Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act* will be submitted. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Atlantic Apprenticeship Curriculum renewal process identified three "industry gates" to provide accountability in the Apprenticeship Program: consultation, curriculum validation and examination validation. The Department will develop and implement a process for industry validation of all Apprenticeship examination item banks. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Department will combine its efforts with other jurisdictions to maintain current, relevant

progress and certification examinations through the testing and implementation of the Interprovincial Computerized Examination Management System. It will also maintain a database system to provide increased efficiency and quality in Apprenticeship and Certification services. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Department will work with business, labour, and training institutions to address skill development issues to meet the needs of the province's changing labour market. It will continue its work with the federal government and other provincial departments to advance common priorities identified under the Labour Market Development Agreement, which include Youth, Information Technology, Literacy and Employability. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Higher Education and Adult Learning, Corporate Administrative Services)

The Department will create and fully implement a learning plan development process for apprentices and trade qualifiers that identifies skill needs, provides opportunities to address those needs and puts in place all support mechanisms needed during training to ensure success. (Core Business Function: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

In partnership with the Department of Labour and Environment and the Nova Scotia Safety Council, the Department will provide support for senior high schools that wish to implement the grade 11 Workplace Health and Safety curriculum. Implementation support will include Board leadership workshops, student learning resources, and ongoing teacher training. (Core Business Function: P-12)

Goal 7: To strengthen accountability in the areas of governance, resource investment and utilization, and reporting of results

The Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities, together with departmental staff and the NSCC Board, will use the NSCC's five year plan review to develop mutually agreed measures of accountability for the first five years of NSCC's mandate. In addition, these same partners will specify the measures of accountability to be used in the five year review in 2006. (Core Business Functions: Higher Education and Adult Learning)

A new governance model has been being piloted in the Southwest Regional School Board. The Southwest region now has two districts with elected board members: the South Shore District, comprising Lunenburg and Queens counties; and the Tri-County District, comprising Shelburne, Yarmouth and Digby counties. The districts are mainly responsible for educational issues, while the Regional Board is responsible for financial, human resources and operational management issues. This pilot was independently evaluated in December 2001 through a consultative process. A report was submitted to the Minister in January 2002. The Department will review the

recommendations of the evaluators to determine future direction. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Corporate Policy, Corporate Administrative Services)

With regard to the Integrated Data Management Project, the Department of Education, in conjunction with school boards and the NSSBA, will implement the SAP finance, procurement, and business warehouse modules in all seven school boards in Phase I. Phase II will include human resources, maintenance, and student administrative systems. This project will enhance school board accountability, information management, and standardize business practices. Completion is expected in fiscal 2002-03. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Corporate Policy, Corporate Administrative Services)

The Department has undertaken a review of the existing school board financial handbook. As a result of the review, the Department of Finance in conjunction with the school boards is re-drafting a new financial handbook to guide school boards. The revised handbook will ensure school boards are reporting financial results in accordance with generally-accepted accounting principles. Direction in accordance with public sector accounting guidelines will be provided to school boards to cover the areas of recording, reporting and presentation of financial results. (Core Business Functions: P-12, Corporate Administrative Services)

The Department will be providing professional development opportunities for members of School Advisory Councils to ensure members are knowledgeable about their role and have been given the necessary tools to ensure that they are ready to participate effectively in the council. (Core Business Functions: P-12)

The Department will publish annually the *Minister's Report to Parents* providing the student results on provincial, national and international assessment in language arts, mathematics and science. (Core Business Functions: P-12)

The Department is committed to providing parents with regular, clear information on their children's progress. A standard report card is being developed, with clear coding that is meaningful to parents and students. Recommendations on frequency of reporting, as well as other ways to enhance communications with parents, are also being developed. (Core Business Functions: P-12)

The Department will continue discussions with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to finalize negotiations on a new Framework Agreement. This Agreement will more clearly define roles and responsibilities between the federal and provincial governments, facilitate closer collaboration in the development of immigration policies appropriate to the province's needs, and will support joint planning efforts to meet immigrant settlement needs in Nova Scotia. (Core Business Functions: Corporate Policy)

The Department will introduce a new division, Human Resources and Legal Services, to support activities associated with the move to single tier bargaining, to maximize the value of dollars spent for legal advice, to support school boards in addressing current and emerging issues, and to enhance effective human resource planning in the education system. (Core Business Functions: Corporate Administrative Services, P-12, Higher Education and Adult Learning, and Corporate Policy)

In 2002-03, the Province will consult with school boards to examine whether economies and efficiencies can be achieved by consolidating school board audit and payroll processing activities and functions. (Core Business Functions: Corporate Administrative Services, P-12)

6. Priorities for 2002-03 by Core Business Area

Note that the priorities in this section are identical to those in section 5, the only difference is the way they are organized.

Core Business Area: P-12 Education

In 2001-02, two components of the Youth Pathways and Transitions strategy were introduced: the Nova Scotia Student Career Portfolio and the Framework for Joint Educational Program Design and the development of articulation agreements with the Nova Scotia Community College. The implementation of the Youth Pathways and Transitions strategy will continue in 2002-03 with the development of a framework for a Nova Scotia Youth Apprenticeship Program. The Department will also develop two interactive technology course options linked to labour market opportunities, Multimedia 12 and Geomatics 12. (In conjunction with Higher Education and Adult Learning)

As part of its Youth Pathways and Transitions strategy, the Department is developing a resource, *Increasing Learning Success*, to assist high schools in providing a range of services, strategies, and organizational structures designed to improve conditions for learning and increase learning success for all students. The Department will distribute this resource in 2002-03 and will continue to work with boards and schools on related initiatives. (In conjunction with Higher Education and Adult Learning)

A professional development program of studies offered to French second language teachers by Université Sainte-Anne will be coordinated and monitored by the Department. The aim of the program is to offer an opportunity for French second language teachers to improve their French language skills while refining their knowledge and expertise regarding the teaching of French as a second language. (In conjunction with Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The *Information Economy Initiative* to support teaching and learning in grades 4-6 through the use of technology will continue. This initiative includes the provision of computers, software, professional development, and technical support. The Department will continue to coordinate SchoolNet Grassroots initiatives for the development of on-line learning activities for students and to refurbish computers for schools through the federal-provincial Computers for Schools initiative (Technology Recycling Program). For CSAP schools, these last two initiatives are coordinated at the school board level. (In conjunction with Corporate Administrative Services)

With the goal to improve conditions for learning, the Department has also developed a Program of Learning Assessment for Nova Scotia (PLANS). PLANS will continue to provide reliable information on student achievement in specific curriculum areas. During 2002-03, assessments scheduled to be administered are: SAIP Writing (ages 13 and 16, English and French), Junior

High Mathematics, Mathématiques 12, Mathématiques avancées 12, Calcul différentiel et intégral 12, Chemistry 12 (English and French immersion) and Physics 12. As well, other assessments will be developed for administration in 2003-04, namely the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), Reading and Writing Grade 6, Elementary Mathematics and Mathematics 12.

The Department will continue with the implementation of the Code of Conduct, which covers all school members. Implementation will include professional development and the development of *Code of Conduct Guidelines* (including discipline tracking and reporting; a policy on formal reference checks for all new staff and volunteers; and a complaints resolution process). Implementation of this initiative will continue with cooperative discipline training and the development of a handbook on positive behaviourial implementation strategies.

The Department will fulfil its mandate of identifying school capital needs through the continual operation of the School Capital Construction Committee, which will report to government on prioritization of capital funding needs for Nova Scotia schools. The Department will continue the delivery of school capital projects approved in July 2000, scheduled for delivery by 2004. Three additional schools were approved for construction in 2001-02, bring the total to 19. Six of the schools were completed by the fall of 2001, one was completed in March 2002, and another eight will be under construction in 2002-03. (In conjunction with Corporate Administrative Services)

There will be a renovation, addition and alteration program that will enhance and/or replace major school building components on a priority basis. The Department will work with school boards and other provincial departments to identify and resolve environmental problems. A database of school renovation and maintenance needs will be developed in conjunction with school boards. This database will assist the Department in establishing renovation and maintenance needs for schools in 2002-03 and beyond. (In conjunction with Corporate Administrative Services)

The Department will examine the teacher certification requirements, standards and procedures within the Atlantic Provinces, with a view to achieving greater mobility within the region. (In conjunction with Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Department will continue to update correspondence study courses to reflect current public school program priorities and will work through APEF to develop on-line Atlantic Canada courses.

In 2002-03, the Department will implement a mechanism to support the Provincial Student Education Council. The Council will help improve communications between the Department and public school students, give students a voice in education decisions, and provide students with new opportunities for leadership development and training.

A video is presently being developed to demonstrate effective classroom practices for teaching Core French at the junior high level. This video will be presented to teachers during professional development days in 2002-03.

Literacy continues to be a priority. The Department's *Active Young Readers/Jeunes lecteurs actifs* initiative will continue to provide support for the literacy development of students in grades primary–6. The Department will develop an assessment resource for use by grades 4–6 Anglophone classroom teachers in assessing students' reading development, strengths and learning needs. The Department will participate with the other Atlantic provinces in developing a literacy assessment resource for French immersion students in grades 4–6.

The *Active Young Readers/Jeunes lecteurs actifs* initiative will expand to provide increased support for grade 7 students. The focus at this level will be on high quality literacy instruction across the curriculum for all learners and effective interventions for those students having literacy difficulties. The Department will provide learning resources for students, leadership training for school board teams, summer institutes, and other professional development programs for Anglophone and Francophone teachers.

The Department's literacy strategy will be expanded to include an emphasis on grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation through a *Writers in Action* initiative beginning at the grade 4 level. This initiative will ensure that all students have access to structured, sequential language instruction. This initiative will include the provision of learning resources, teaching materials, and professional development programs.

A literacy strategy will be developed for Acadian students beginning at the grade 4 level and extending to grade 7. This initiative, entitled "Écrivains à l'oeuvre", has been broadened to include grammar, punctuation and spelling strategies. The Department will identify appropriate resource materials for teachers and students, and will provide professional development through a summer institute.

The Department will continue the development of curriculum guides and identification of learning resources for French first language core programs, Core French, as well as French immersion programs, and will continue to assist school boards with the implementation of French First Language and French Second Language programs.

In recent years, program initiatives at the elementary level have focused on the implementation of new curriculum in particular subject areas—mathematics, language arts, physical education, and visual arts. This subject area focus will continue in 2002-03 with the implementation of the grades primary and 1 Atlantic Canada science curriculum. The Department will assist school boards through the provision of a leadership workshop, a summer institute, teaching resources, and the tools young learners need for hands-on, minds-on science experiences.

In 2002-03, the Department will introduce an initiative to assist elementary teachers in planning their instructional program in ways that reflect the connections among the expected learning outcomes in various subject areas. This *CurriculumLinks* initiative will begin with grades primary and 1 and will include the provision of professional development workshops and resources. Effective use of instructional time will be a particular emphasis.

Mathematics continues to be a priority area. The Department will assist school boards in strengthening their elementary and junior high mathematics programs through the provision of workshops for lead teachers and school principals in each region. Emphasis will be placed on effective use of learning materials. The Department will begin development of a data bank (hard copy and on-line) of mathematics questions to assist teachers in grades 7–12 in designing tests, quizzes, assignments and examinations. Questions for grades 9–11 mathematics will be available by June 2002. Results of program evaluation research currently underway to assess the effectiveness of the new courses, Mathematics 10 Plus and Mathematics Foundations 10 Plus, will be available in August 2002. The Department will use these results to inform the strategy for responding to students who require additional support in mathematics.

Canadian History 11, Histoire du Canada 11, and Études acadiennes 11 will be implemented in September 2002. The Department will assist school boards with implementation of these courses and other courses that fulfil the Canadian history credit requirement—African Canadian History 11, Gaelic Studies 11, and Mi'kmaq Studies 10. This initiative will include the provision of an implementation leadership workshop, a summer institute, learning resources, and teaching materials.

The Department will participate in a needs assessment, funded by the Software Human Resource Council, to determine its future participation in the "Software Career Preparation Project", which may provide transition to work opportunities for the information technology sector for Nova Scotia high school students. (In conjunction with Higher Education and Adult Learning)

The Department will continue to work within the APEF on projects for Acadian schools and for French second language programs. Such projects include the French language arts program offered in grades 9 to 12 in Acadian schools, the analysis of a regional survey administered to grade 11 students no longer taking Core French, and the development of a literacy assessment resource for grade 4-6 French immersion students.

The Department will be negotiating with Canadian Heritage for Supplementary Funding under the Official Languages in Education Program. The Department has several initiatives to propose and a submission for funding has been made.

The Department will continue to develop, evaluate, and distribute print and non-print resources to support public school program implementation and teacher professional development, and to provide an archival photographic service for museums.

An ESL Teacher's resource is under development to include math and language assessments, teaching strategies, program planning, evaluation and reporting. (In conjunction with Corporate Policy)

The Department's Active Healthy Schools strategy will include continued assistance to school boards in the implementation of the grades primary–6 and grades 7–9 physical education curriculum. The Department will develop new physical education curriculum for grades 10–12.

The Department will continue to collaborate with partners on intergovernmental projects including the Physically Active Children and Youth (PACY) Strategy, the Tobacco Strategy, Youth Mental Strategy, Youth Sexual Health Strategy, Healthy Eating Strategy, and Chronic Disease Strategy. With reference to the Tobacco Strategy, the Department will provide consultative services to boards in their implementation of tobacco prevention curriculum and high school peer-led cessation initiatives, including use of related learning resources. The Department will continue to work with other members of the Nova Scotia School Smoking Prevention Coalition and to provide consultative and advisory services regarding *Making It Work! A Handbook for Creating Effective School Smoking Policies.*

The Department will implement a number of safety initiatives. These will include the distribution of *Physical Education Safety Guidelines* and *Science Safety Guidelines* to all public schools and the provision of consultative services to school boards regarding their implementation to ensure safe learning environments for all schools in the areas of science and physical education.

In September 2002, the Department will begin implementation of new curriculum for health education grades 4–6. Related resources, including *Drawing The Line: A resource for the prevention of problem gambling*, developed in partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Health Problem Gambling Services, and *Growing Up, Growing Older: A classroom resource for promoting intergenerational understanding,* developed in partnership with the Nova Scotia Senior Citizens' Secretariat, will also be implemented at this time. In consultation with health community partners, the *Health/Personal Development and Relationships: Grades 7–9* program will be revised to strengthen the health education component; learning resources will be identified to support implementation of the new curriculum in 2003–04.

Availability of school facilities for purposes other than education varies across the province, in terms of ease of access, rates and hours of availability. A policy framework is being developed to equalize access, standardize rates charged, and ensure facilities are available for community and youth use for as many hours as possible. In 2002-03, the Department will introduce the policy framework and assist school boards to effectively adjust their present practices. (In conjunction with Corporate Administrative Services)

The Department will continue to work toward the establishment of an Africentric Learning

Institute and implementation of other key recommendations of the *Black Learners Advisory Committee (BLAC) Report on Education.* Consultative and advisory services will be provided to boards and schools that wish to pilot African Heritage Literature 12 in 2002-03. The Department will assist boards with implementation of the revised African Canadian History 11 and Mi'kmaq Studies 10 courses. The development of Mi'kmaw language courses at the junior high level will continue.

The *Racial Equity Policy* will be introduced in 2002-03. This policy outlines the Department's commitment to promoting equity in our public school system. The policy supports the work done by school boards to develop their own racial equity policies and will provide an overall provincial framework to ensure consistency. A Human Rights in Education Conference will be held in the fall of 2002 to highlight and raise awareness of issues outlined in the Racial Equity Policy.

In partnership with the Department of Labour and Environment and the Nova Scotia Safety Council, the Department will provide support for senior high schools that wish to implement the grade 11 Workplace Health and Safety curriculum. Implementation support will include Board leadership workshops, student learning resources, and ongoing teacher training.

A new governance model has been piloted in the Southwest Regional School Board. The Southwest region now has two districts with elected board members: the South Shore District, comprising Lunenburg and Queens counties; and the Tri-County District, comprising Shelburne, Yarmouth and Digby counties. The districts are mainly responsible for educational issues, while the Regional Board is responsible for financial, human resources and operational management issues. This pilot was independently evaluated in December 2001 through a consultative process. A report was submitted to the Minister in January 2002. The Department will review the recommendations of the evaluators to determine future direction. (In conjunction with Corporate Policy and Corporate Administrative Services)

The Department will be providing professional development opportunities for members of School Advisory Councils to ensure members are knowledgeable about their role and have been given the necessary tools to ensure that they are ready to participate effectively in the council.

The Department will publish annually the *Minister's Report to Parents*, providing the student results on provincial, national and international assessment in language arts, mathematics and science.

The Department will pursue pilot projects in school accreditation, to give parents and schools greater opportunity to support school improvement. The pilot projects will allow school advisory councils, in consultation with school staff and home and school associations, to develop school improvement plans linked to educational priorities in the school. Those priorities must be linked to evidence of needs, such as parent surveys, statistics regarding student outcomes, test

results, etc. The improvement plan will be assessed by an external team. Once approved, the school will implement the plan. After demonstrating progress in meeting its goals, the school will be accredited.

The Department is committed to providing parents with regular, clear information on their children's progress. A standard report card is being developed, with clear coding that is meaningful to parents and students. Recommendations on frequency of reporting, as well as other ways to enhance communications with parents, are also being developed.

The Department will work with school boards on a Time to Learn Strategy. The goal is to set daily standards of time to spend on math and language arts. A minimum standard of 90-120 minutes daily is proposed in language arts for elementary. In math, a daily standard of 45 minutes to one hour is proposed at elementary. The Department will also work with school boards on ways to add class time in higher grades in these essential subjects.

Core Business Area: Higher Education and Adult Learning

As the lead agency responsible to deliver a comprehensive labour market strategy, the Department of Education will work with business, labour and educational institutions to improve the skill level of the existing Nova Scotia workforce and develop the appropriate skills sets for new entrants to Nova Scotia workplaces. Priorities for 2002-03 include:

- development of a comprehensive Skills Nova Scotia Strategy
- creation of a Partners Forum to advise Government on the broad issues and opportunities facing the Nova Scotian labour market
- development of Labour Market Information Products and Services to support decision-making by individuals, business and labour, policy makers and education providers
- creation of funding mechanisms to support strategic investment and action through a Sectoral or Occupational Opportunity Analysis

The Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities will consider issues including: quality assurance, accountability and the role and capacity of post-secondary education institutions. The Advisory Board will also consult with post-secondary institutions on issues such as the need to define institutional and system-wide mission statements, greater articulation between the community college and university systems, and institutional and system planning to respond to the need for health care professionals.

Université Sainte-Anne and Collège de l'Acadie will be assisted to merge and become a university/college for the Acadian/French population of Nova Scotia, achieving both critical mass and a wider delivery capacity.

The Department will work with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) on their growth strategy. This growth strategy recommends increasing NSCC enrolment to approximately 11,000

students, an increase of 50%. The recommended expansion of the community college enrolments will enable the NSCC to address numerous access, equity and diversity issues and strengthen its provision of programs in metro and select regional sites.

In 2002-03, the Department will conduct a review of the General Regulations made pursuant to the *Private Career Colleges Regulation Act* to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the private career college sector and to ensure that consumer protection remains a priority.

The Department will continue to implement the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) to administer and coordinate, through partnerships, a system of programs that will create a clear pathway for adults seeking a high school graduation diploma. This system will deliver the credits required for the new Nova Scotia High School Diploma for Adults. Priority will be given to the development of guidelines and procedures for the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition component of the diploma. Curriculum development to ensure the Adult Learning Program meets the outcomes of the high school program will be ongoing. During the implementation phase of NSSAL the Department will work closely with NSCC, Collège de l'Acadie, school boards, community-based learning organizations, Human Resource Development Canada and Community Services. Through its seven Regional Planning Teams, the Department will continue to strengthen partnerships between these funding agencies and program delivery organizations. The teams will identify adult learning priorities, develop strategies for informing the public and other partners of the School for Adult Learning and establish referral protocols to ensure that adult learners are appropriately served. (In conjunction with P-12)

Priorities for the Community Learning Initiative this year include the development of a professional development strategy for adult literacy practitioners. Particular emphasis will be placed on expanding opportunities for educators to receive training and support on student assessment and program evaluation. The Department will work in partnership with Community Learning Networks and the National Literacy Secretariat to distribute learner intake assessment and portfolio tools, as well as program evaluation resources.

The Department will continue implementation of the General Educational Development new test series (GED 2002) in order to provide adults with an opportunity to acquire a high school equivalency. Successfully passing the GED improves Nova Scotians' access to further training and employability. (In conjunction with P-12)

The Department will facilitate innovative partnerships to encourage family involvement in learning. In collaboration with the Halifax Youth Foundation, the Department will expand project opportunities though the Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund. It will also explore the creation of good practice guidelines to direct the development of quality programs.

The Department will work with hospital and community partners to advance an infant gift-book

program, *Read to Me!*, which supports learning development in our youngest citizens.

Nova Scotia's public libraries are expanding their efforts to readily provide consumer health and wellness information across the province. A new partnership with the Alzheimer Society will expand the availability of quality print resources throughout the province. Under this partnership, the Society has placed a core collection of print resources in all nine regional libraries. This model will be used as a basis for further partnerships with other member organizations in the Health Charities Network.

The Adopt-a-Library Literacy program, in partnership with the RCMP and local police agencies, will be expanded to a province-wide program as a pro-active crime prevention initiative. Beginning this year, ongoing funding sources, partnerships and an administrative infrastructure will be developed with the goal of having an established foundation at the end of three years. This initiative is expected to have a significant impact on both literacy and crime prevention.

The regional libraries' Summer Reading Program will be expanded to include reading/writing camps for children. In partnership with the Writers Federation of Nova Scotia, a pilot project will see a week long day camp in various locations across the province. At the camp children will receive further encouragement and support in reading and writing by selected local authors.

The delivery of student assistance in Nova Scotia is undergoing substantial examination. Issues such as the provision of enhanced student debt relief, new partnerships with financial institutions, regionalization of some services and a new designation policy for institutions are being considered.

Nova Scotia has cooperated with the other Atlantic provinces to revise and renew training standards in all Apprenticeship programs. In 2002-03, the standards will be revised in thirteen additional Apprenticeship programs which will be implemented through the training providers. In addition, the Department will increase accessibility to Apprenticeship programs by expanding the programs offered through distance education and part-time studies.

The Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD) initiative will develop transition to employment programs for Nova Scotians with disabilities involved in post-secondary training. The EAPD initiative will seek matching funding or donated services from various partners to ensure these students achieve greater success in obtaining relevant employment following graduation.

The Virtual Library initiative will deliver interactive library service and equal access to library information resources to all Nova Scotians via the Internet. When fully implemented, the Virtual Library will allow users to electronically register for a library card, access on-line reference sources, place holds on materials in their own library's collection, renew items that are out on loan, request that materials be borrowed from outside their regional library system, and

interactively receive an answer to an information query. This will greatly increase the capacity of people in small and rural communities for lifelong learning.

The *Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act* was last revised in 1989. The Provincial Apprenticeship Board will continue with public consultation and focus group sessions following the completion and distribution of a discussion paper in late 2001-02. In early 2002-03, a recommendation report on revisions to the *Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act* will be submitted.

The Atlantic Apprenticeship Curriculum renewal process identified three "industry gates" to provide accountability in the Apprenticeship Program: consultation, curriculum validation and examination validation. The Department will develop and implement a process for industry validation of all Apprenticeship examination item banks.

The Department will combine its efforts with other jurisdictions to maintain current, relevant progress and certification examinations through the testing and implementation of the Interprovincial Computerized Examination Management System. It will also maintain a database system to provide increased efficiency and quality in Apprenticeship and Certification services.

The Department will work with business, labour, and training institutions to address skill development issues to meet the needs of the province's changing labour market. It will continue its work with the federal government and other provincial departments to advance common priorities identified under the Labour Market Development Agreement, which include Youth, Information Technology, Literacy and Employability. (In conjunction with P-12 and Corporate Administrative Services)

The Department will create and fully implement a learning plan development process for apprentices and trade qualifiers that identifies skill needs, provides opportunities to address those needs and puts in place support mechanisms needed during training to ensure success.

The Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities, together with departmental staff and the NSCC Board, will use the NSCC's five year plan review to develop mutually agreed measures of accountability for the first five years of NSCC's mandate. In addition, these same partners will specify the measures of accountability to be used in the five year review in 2006.

Core Business Area: Corporate Policy

The Education Consultative Forum (ECF) Subcommittee on Teacher Demand and Supply submitted a report to the Minister and the ECF in December of 2001. Recommendations in this report are intended to address potential shortages of teachers in certain subject areas and improve the utilization of the substitute teacher workforce. Government will undertake a review of these recommendations to determine future direction. (In conjunction with P-12 and Higher Education

and Adult Learning)

The Department will continue discussions with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to finalize negotiations on a new Framework Agreement. This Agreement will more clearly define roles and responsibilities between the federal and provincial governments, facilitate closer collaboration in the development of immigration policies appropriate to the province's needs, and will support joint planning efforts to meet immigrant settlement needs in Nova Scotia.

Core Business Area: Corporate Administrative Services

With regard to the Integrated Data Management Project, the Department of Education, in conjunction with school boards and the NSSBA, will implement the SAP finance, procurement, and business warehouse modules in all seven school boards in Phase I. Phase II will include human resources, maintenance, and student administrative systems. This project will enhance school board accountability, information management, and standardize business practices. Completion is expected in fiscal 2002-03. (In conjunction with P-12 and Corporate Policy)

The Department has undertaken a review of the existing school board financial handbook. As a result of the review, the Department of Finance in conjunction with the school boards is re-drafting a new financial handbook to guide school boards. The revised handbook will ensure school boards are reporting financial results in accordance with generally-accepted accounting principles. Direction in accordance with public sector accounting guidelines will be provided to school boards to cover the areas of recording, reporting and presentation of financial results. (In conjunction with P-12)

The Department will introduce a new division, Human Resources and Legal Services, to support activities associated with the move to single tier bargaining, to maximize the value of dollars spent for legal advice, to support school boards in addressing current and emerging issues, and to enhance effective human resource planning in the education system. (In conjunction with P-12, Higher Education and Adult Learning, and Corporate Policy)

In 2002-03, the Province will consult with school boards to examine whether economies and efficiencies can be achieved by consolidating school board audit and payroll processing activities and functions.

7. Budgeting Context

Current and Capital Expenditures	2000-01(a)	2001-02(f)	2002-03 (E)
Education	$872,698,613	$905,580,000	$928,733,000
Assistance to Universities	203,488,893	201,732,000	201,732,000
TOTAL	**$1,076,187,506**	**$1,107,312,000**	**$1,130,465,000**

As noted above, the Department is currently forecasting total 2001-02 expenditures of $1,107,312,000, resulting in a forecast over expenditure of $17,643,000. This variance is substantially composed of:

• Non-TCA Capital Expenditures	$3,955,000
• Student Assistance — Loan Guarantee Program	4,000,000
• "In Study Interest" and "Interest Relief" Savings	(1,747,000)
• Increased Amortization — Purchase of FFE&T	2,591,000
• Additional Funding to School Boards to Avoid Deficits	2,500,000
• Additional 2001-02 Funding Commitments to School Boards	1,723,000
• Teacher's Pension Plan — Flexible Option Plan Take-up	1,268,000
• NSCC Capacity Growth Plan	1,000,000
• Forfeit of Recovery re: Advanced Study Program	729,000
• Additional Funding UCCB re: Pre-Employment Program	500,000
• Additional Learning Resources for Schools	500,000
• Acadian and French Language Services	425,000
• Apprenticeship Training in Class, Internet, and Delivery Costs	400,000
• Other Miscellaneous Savings	(201,000)
• Total	$17,643,000

The following schedule illustrates the Estimates of the major business areas of the Department of Education for the 2001-02 and 2002-03 fiscal years. The majority of the budget comprises grants and assistance to external organizations who deliver educational programs and services throughout Nova Scotia.

The core businesses of the Department and their associated Estimates are as follows:

Core Businesses	2001-02 ($000)	2002-03[1] ($000)
Senior Management	$383.0	$386.0
Public Schools	778,810.0	807,939.0
Higher Education/Adult Learning (HEAL)	301,332.0	309,502.0
Corporate Administrative Services and Corporate Policy	9,144.0	12,638.0
TOTAL	**$1,089,669.0**	**$1,130,465.0**

The budget target for the Department of Education increased by $40.8 million.

[1]This represents budget targets and approved critical issues as of Mar. 05, 2002.

Increased funding was provided to the Department for the following cost pressures:

	$ 000's
• Wage settlements, step/benefit increases, service awards in the public school sector, insurance, pensions	28,304
• Increase in capital amortization, - public schools sector	6,412
• Funding of 01/02 Departmental commitments - public school sector	4,100
• Increase in non TCA renovations - public schools sector	3,000
• Wage settlements - Nova Scotia Community College & Collége de l'Acadie	5,611
• School Board restructuring/IDMP/Teacher Supply and Demand	520
• Program Development and Implementation - public schools sector	1,310
• School for Adult Learning- HEAL	950
• USA/Collège de l'Acadie merger - HEAL	500
• Skills Development/Apprenticeship-HEAL	300
• French Language Education	190
• Provincial Library - HEAL	50
• PSA Awards at RSBs	2,500
• Wage settlements in the public sector	895
• Miscellaneous increases (Youth Secretariat, Labour Market Development Secretariat, APSEA)	979
	$55,621

Savings identified by the Department were as follows:	$ 000's
• Adjustment of municipal contribution	$ (2,805)
• Savings due to staff replacement differential	(3,946)
• Anticipated savings in fuel unit cost	(1,261)
• Enrollment decline reduction	(5,470)
• Reduction in facilities cost related to P3	(578)
• Reduction in departmental operational expenditures	(548)
• Other	(243)
	$ (14,851)

8. Outcome Measures

Outcome	Indicator	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2004-05	Strategies
Core Business Area: P-12 Education					
Better Educated Nova Scotians	*Learning Success*	SAIP results (16-year-olds) Percentage at Level 3 or above	Reading (1998): 66% Writing (1998): 89% Math (1997): 47% Science (1999): 75%	Reading (2005): 72% Writing (2002): Increase Math (2006): 50% Science (2004): Increase	• Expand *Active Young Readers/Lecteurs actifs* initiatives to grade 7 • Introduce *Writers in Action* initiative at grade 4 • Develop teaching resources for mathematics P-9 • Mandate instructional time allotment for language arts and mathematics P-6 • Implement new science program P-1 • Provide curriculum supplements for chemistry and physics curriculum guides
		PISA Results (15-year-olds) Scale score	Reading (2000): 521 Math (2000): 513 Science (2000) 516	Reading (2003): 534 Math (2003): 533 Science (2003): 529	
		Nova Scotia Examinations Results (grade 12) Percent passing	English (2001): 67% Chemistry (2001): 65% Physics (2001): 40%	English: 70% Chemistry: 70% Physics: 60%	
		Graduation Rate	78.9% (1999-00)	Increase	• Continue implementation of *Youth Pathways and Transitions* strategy
Safe Learning Environment	*Safe/healthy facilities*	Percentage of schools in-servicing Code of Conduct	0% (2001-02)	100% of schools	• Support *Code of Conduct* implementation through professional development • Develop *Code of Conduct Guidelines*

Outcome	Indicator	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2004-05	Strategies
Safe Learning Environment	*Students feel safe*	Percentage of grade 8 students reporting that they agree with the statement "I feel safe from personal harm"	Baseline data being collected in February 2002	To be developed	• Support *Code of Conduct* implementation through professional development • Develop *Code of Conduct Guidelines* Note the survey is for Anglophone and French Immersion only
	Safe/healthy learning environment	Percentage of schools implementing *Physical Education Safety Guidelines*	0% (2001-02)	100%	• Implementation of *Physical Education Safety Guidelines*
		Percentage of schools implementing *Science Safety Guidelines*	0% (2001-02)	100%	• Implementation of *Science Safety Guidelines*
Healthy students	*Cigarette use*	Percent of students in grades 7, 9, 10 and 12, using cigarettes at least once in the past year	36.1% (1998)	Decrease	• Implementation of new curriculum and resources for *Health Education* grades 4-6 • Revision of *Smoke-Free for Life* resources
Accessibility	*Use of technology*	P-12 computer ratio	A ratio is being calculated for the 2001-02 school year	1:5 (target for 2005-06)	• Continue Information Economy Initiative in grades 4-6 • Continue Technology Recycling Program

Outcome	Indicator	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2004-05	Strategies
Responsive and flexible learning environment	*Equity*	Number of recommendations of BLAC report that have been implemented	2001: 13 of 30 recommendations implemented	2005: 20 of 30 recommendations implemented	• Implementation of BLAC report recommendations • African Heritage Literature 12 pilot • Workshops for African Nova Scotian parents on supporting children's learning • Implementation of African Canadian Studies 11 • Implementation of Mi'kmaq Studies 10 • Racial Equity Policy professional development
		Percentage of schools in-servicing Racial Equity Policy	0% (2001-02)	100%	
Improved accountability/ reporting of results	*Accountability measures*	Percent of School Boards with school board business plans	14% (2001-02)	100%	• Support school boards with the development of their business plans
		Reporting of Assessment Results	First report in 2001-02	Annually	• Minister's Report to Parents

Outcome	Indicator	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2004-05	Strategies
Core Business Area: Higher Education and Adult Learning					
Better Educated Nova Scotians	*Learning Success*	Percent of Nova Scotians aged 25-54 with post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree	58% of Nova Scotians aged 25-54 (2000)	Increase	• Nova Scotia Advisory Board on Colleges and Universities discussions • Nova Scotia Community College growth strategy • Université Sainte-Anne and Collège de l'Acadie merger • Improvements to the Student Assistance Program
		Number of diplomas, certificates and degrees issued by Nova Scotia institutions	12,124 (1999)	Increase	
	Nova Scotians well prepared for lifelong learning	Number of adult Nova Scotians participating in literacy and upgrading through the Nova Scotia school for Adult Learning	To be based upon the 2001-02 program year numbers	Increase	• Implementation of the Nova Scotia School of Adult Learning
		Number of adult Nova Scotians graduating with a high school diploma for adults	To be based upon the 2001-02 program year numbers	Increase	• Creation of the Nova Scotia High School Diploma for Adults

Outcome	Indicator	Measure	Base Year Measure	Target 2004-05	Strategies
Better Educated Nova Scotians	*Nova Scotians well prepared for lifelong learning*	Number of family literacy projects sponsored	To be based upon the 2001-02 program year numbers	Increase	• Administration of Family Literacy Initiative Endowment Fund
		Number of participants in Workplace Education programs	1,000 (estimate) (2001)	Increase	• Workplace Education Program
Accessibility	*Opportunities to Learn*	Full-time post-secondary enrolment	42% of Nova Scotians aged 18-24 (1998-99)	Increase	• Improvements to the Student Assistance Program